

The Independent Clause

- 6b.** An **independent** (or **main**) **clause** expresses a complete thought and can stand by itself as a complete sentence.

EXAMPLES ^S People from many parts of Europe have [✓] immigrated to the United States.

[one independent clause]

^S In the mid-1800s, a famine [✓] hit Ireland, and ^S many Irish citizens [✓] moved to the United States. [two independent clauses]

Although the immigrants left many of their belongings behind, ^S they [✓] brought with them their traditions. [one subordinate clause and one independent clause]

EXERCISE A In each of the following sentences, draw one line under the subject and two lines under the verb in the independent clause.

Example 1. The United States is known as a country of immigrants.

1. In the nineteenth century, Scotch-Irish immigrants came to the United States.
2. They brought with them their music and their way of speaking.
3. Many settled in the south-central part of the United States.
4. In some places you can still hear some of the Scotch-Irish songs.
5. One singer of those old ballads is Jean Ritchie.
6. Audiences love Ritchie's version of "Barbara Allan."
7. Ritchie can play the dulcimer as well as the guitar.
8. The dulcimer, which is an oval-shaped stringed instrument, is especially popular among the people of the southern Appalachians.
9. Before her solo career, Ritchie sang with her family.
10. Every group of immigrants brings its own special treasures to our shores.

EXERCISE B For each of the following sentences, decide whether the underlined clause is or is not an independent clause. On the line provided, write *Yes* if it is or *No* if it is not.

Example No 1. The campers fished until they were exhausted.

- _____ 11. Alex sang, and Lani played the harpsichord.
- _____ 12. Have you met our new next-door neighbors?
- _____ 13. We cannot leave because the work has not been completed.
- _____ 14. If I were president, I would send an environmental bill to Congress.
- _____ 15. Some cobras squirt poison when they are attacked.